

Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3100
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Education Committee Co-Chairs, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members,

I am writing to formally submit written testimony in support of House Bill 6884: An Act Concerning the Recruitment, Retention and Enhancement of the Teaching Profession.

As the son of an educator who has taught in classrooms for most of my life, I heard stories about the teaching profession. I have also seen firsthand how much hard work and how much of their own money teachers put into ensuring that students not only have the resources necessary to learn, but additionally the resources necessary to succeed.

Whether it is arriving early to prepare for a first period class, grading homework assignments and exams for hours after returning from work an hour away, or drafting lesson plans for an upcoming semester, if I may say so, teachers like my mom are what make Connecticut such an amazing place for students to shine, families to flourish, and municipalities to prosper. Perhaps like other folks, I took for granted a lot of what my own teachers did as well for my classes growing up. Until later, regrettably, I never considered how much effort, time, and money goes into the mere basics of teaching in a classroom.

In my professional capacity, I work at Teach Plus, a national teacher leadership nonprofit organization empowering excellent, experienced, and diverse educators from a dozen states (so far). Hearing about their personal experiences can be tough since, in some of their states, legislation is enacted that harms the teaching profession while negatively impacting teachers and, subsequently, their students.

A big part of the reason that teachers stay at a certain school in a certain district is if they feel sufficiently supported. Yes, salaries and equitable school funding are both important parts not to be taken for granted. But when teachers see in their administrators, their colleagues and, yes, even their elected officials, that people care about their well-being, there are few things that can have as much of an effect when it comes to recruitment and retention efforts no matter the scholastic grade or even the zip code.

Passing HB 6884 is crucial to ensuring that Connecticut maintains its reputation as a state that welcomes and then encourages teachers to stay in the classroom; to be the best they can be so students can grow and have the potential for the utmost achievement in the education system. Please vote in favor of HB 6884. Teachers, students, and their communities will thank you.

Sincerely,

Miles Halpine
Stamford, Connecticut